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WORKING PAPER

5 September 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of ARGO Steering Committee with Working Team at [redacted], Alexandria; 1 September 1967, 1400 hours

1. Present: [redacted] Chairman, Steering Committee, Working Team, and other representatives of working agencies; from CIA was [redacted] from NPIC. *(see submittant?)*

2. [redacted] began the meeting by saying the Steering Committee thought it should meet with the working group to get first-hand their views. The project officer, [redacted] (of GIMRADA), being late, he would call on the working members of each agency.

3. [redacted] of USGS asked to lead off and voiced the concern of the team as to what the purpose of the exercise was and queried whether it was effective use of the scientists' time. [redacted] (USGS) working member then took over and began by saying results would not be something they would wish to stake their reputations on; felt they had been spread too thin; as a familiarization exercise the project had a certain merit but now they were just doing "busy work" and felt they should give up PHASE II and proceed on to the reporting in PHASE III. He spoke of lack of ground truth and data bank; felt they were working somewhat in a vacuum.

4. Other working members carried on in similar vein. At the scales they were using and the area covered most information gained came down to geographic features, a basic tool for all participants but not contributing further to the dynamics of their different disciplines. There was no debating the value of the photography as a basic cartographic tool, but they could not do all by photos alone; they need collateral and ground truth. (They had been provided mosaics at 1:1,000,000, 1:630,000 and 1:250,000 scale.) There were complaints about the equipment. They spoke of the orientation given them at NPIC and the tour of AMS, in both places where they saw all sorts of sophisticated gear and then they were provided with

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a handlens and a straight-edge to do their research and devise a proper evaluation. One suggested they should have done the exercise at NPIC or AMS. They spoke particularly of lacking an [redacted] viewer. A hydrographer said, for example, that it was essential but impossible for him to tell whether streams were intermittent or not from the material with which he was provided; at AMS, with the photography on an [redacted] viewer, he could see the water, even the wavelets. Some felt that rather than trying to cover such large areas (three, several thousand square miles each, had been chosen), they would have been better off to have worked a few frames on the [redacted] viewer; they made plain they did not want to degrade the material but that they had bitten off more than they could chew.

5. [redacted] asked if they were recommending they not continue PHASE II and if they were saying they could not add significantly to the data base that already existed; the latter was an important statement but he doubted whether the group was ready to make that decision. What they were implying was that it doesn't make any difference whether the photography was there or not. The problem was that here is this wealth of material covering the world and what use could the civilian agencies make of it. A "mix" with other sources was certainly expected but what was the nature of mixes. He said the team would have to make the basic decisions but that a paper was expected from them discussing their conclusions in relation to the objectives of the exercise. (Someone said, "We don't know what the objectives are".)

6. [redacted] (Agriculture) noted they were being asked to look at material "peaked" for cultural items. A different peaking - different filters and films - would be better for natural resources. [redacted] (NASA) said of course they were interested in developing the collection systems for earth resources.

7. [redacted] Corps of Engineers, pointed out that the military use the material for mapping even though it was not designed for that and he thought there must be a wealth of information for the civilian agencies to use even though the material was not collected with their problems in mind.

8. [redacted] again said that there were two things to make plain:

a. There was a wealth of photography covering the whole world. There was no reason why this should not be used for operational decisions at higher levels; he was not speaking now of downgrading security controls.

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b. Each, as the representative of his agency, should decide how this material can be useful to his agency.

9. [redacted] suggested that there was a security problem: what size cadre would be necessary to make exploitation effective? Would there be one center or more? [redacted] replied this was a major government decision for the future. In the meantime it was up to the civilian agencies to familiarize themselves with the material so that decisions would not be made out of ignorance.

10. Then followed more discussion how to proceed: whether the whole group should go to work on an AID problem relating to agricultural land in the Santa Cruz area of Brazil, whether to finish the large Area I already begun, whether to continue with the hydrological study in Area III. [redacted] said he needed a paper in one week stating what they intended to do. [redacted] AID will chair. [redacted] said it was important PHASE II be generally successful and also that AID get results from it. Also something was to be done about getting the equipment they needed. ?

11. Next meeting Friday, 8 September 1967, 1500 hours at [redacted]

12. After meeting Engineers asked if NPIC had an [redacted] viewer available for loan; they would check AMS, also look at a 20X-40X viewer presently at [redacted] but not used so far by the group. I said I would check if they couldn't come up with a solution otherwise.

[redacted]
Intelligence Officer
Operations Staff

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